

WASHINGTON, DC — On Wednesday, February 25, 2009, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) read into the Congressional Record the following appreciation that was penned when he learned of the loss of a young American hero, Staff Sergeant Marc J. Small, U.S. Army, of Collegeville, Pa., who gave his life in service to our Nation on February 12, 2009.

“Madam Speaker,

I rise today to honor a young American hero who has given his all in service to our nation.

A 1997 graduate of Methacton High School, Marc Small, of Collegeville, Pennsylvania, represented the best of our community and country when he decided in 2003 to follow in the patriotic footsteps of his father, Sergeant Major Murray Small, U.S. Army, Retired, and enlist in our Army. As importantly, in following his mother’s compassionate and caring nature, he chose to become a medic with the Army’s Special Forces to assume the responsibility of caring for his comrades in arms as well as some of the poorest people on this earth. As testament to his intelligence, motivation and courage, in less than five years this remarkable young man quickly rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant, learned the invaluable skills necessary to heal soldiers and civilians and earned the extraordinary honor of wearing the treasured “Green Beret.”

Tragically, on February 12, 2009 at Faramuz, Afghanistan, Staff Sergeant Marc J. Small, of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), U.S. Army, succumbed to wounds sustained in combat. Before his life was cut short, this young warrior had treated hundreds of Afghani civilians and in the process displayed the very best of the American spirit and character.

By the loss of SSG Marc J. Small we are a much lesser nation and community – but only for the briefest of periods. Because given the very special nature of this healer and warrior, I am certain that from this tragedy other young men and women will be inspired by the heroism and selflessness of SSG Small. And from their skills, valor and compassion, the best traditions of our nation will live on – as they must – for this world remains a very dangerous place and the need for our nation to tend to the needs of the poor and oppressed in many remote regions is great.

Madam Speaker I ask that we take a moment to reflect on the service SSG Marc Small has made on our behalf and that we thank his mother, Mary MacFarland; his father, SGM Murray Small U.S. Army (Ret); his step-father Peter MacFarland; his step-mother Karen Small; his brother Matt; sisters Heather MacFarland Wellock, Jennifer MacFarland, and Megan MacFarland; stepbrothers Travis and Tyler Baney; and Amanda Charney who Marc Small deeply loved.

I join all of the constituents of the 7th Congressional District and good Americans everywhere when I pledge that the service and sacrifice of SSG Marc J. Small, U.S. Army, will always be remembered and forever honored.”

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of “Deep Blue,” the Navy’s anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the “Global War on Terrorism.” He served as President Clinton’s Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*

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